Digital Citizenship Lesson Plan

Cyberbullying Sucks

General Topic (as defined in the Digital Literacy Framework)	DD2
Digital Citizenship d) Cyberbullying	

Applicable Grade Range
3-5

Outcome(s) to be Addressed
The student understands how it feels to be cyberbullied, how cyberbullying is similar to or different than in-person bullying, and strategies for handling cyberbullying when it arises.

Importance / Significance of Lesson
Cyberbullying is a trend that is on the rise and all too common in today's digital world. Students need to understand what cyberbullying is, how it affects people and what they can do to stop it.

Duration
30-45 minutes with discussion

Overview
Students will brainstorm ways that bullying and cyberbullying are alike and different, watch some videos about how it feels and what to do about it and develop strategies to avoid it or deal with it if it happens. Students will develop their own 'online code of conduct' that they can follow when working online.

Required Resources
Computer hooked up to a projector Class set of laptops/access to the computer lab or class set of iPads/iPods Set of class accounts for mind mapping program

Lesson Plan and Extension Activities
Have students work in groups of three or four (one computer per group). Using https://bubbl.us/ (free mind mapping program) have them create a mind map with 'cyberbullying' as their main topic and listing as many ideas about cyberbullying that they can come up with: what it is, what it looks like, what it feels like, how to stop it, why it happens. Allow the brainstorming to go on for about 10 minutes or until you see that the flow of ideas is starting to slow down. Using a projector watch http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/ with the group. Have the students add to their mind maps based on the information they've just heard while the teacher circulates to support discussion of ideas. Have students create a t-chart in Word (using a table format) that identifies ways in which bullying and cyberbullying are alike and ways that they are different. Key points to consider: Similarities: Both involve a bully and someone being bullied Both cause hurt, trauma and depression – the effects of which can last a lifetime Both can lead to police involvement Both are wrong Differences: Cyberbullying can be anonymous – so the victim may or may not know their attacker Cyberbullying can happen close to home or from across the world Cyberbullying often involves digital media (pictures or videos) where the victim is threatened with public embarrassment on a large scale I they don't follow the bullies demands Cyberbullying spreads quickly. Texts, social media and access to smartphones makes the scope of the cyberbullying much larger and often follows the victim, even if they move or change schools. Cyberbullying posts are hard to erase as they are reposted many times by many people. Cyberbullies can reach their victims anytime and anywhere, it is not just limited to the schoolyard.   Watch http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xa0L2gHx4xM by students at Joyanne Miller School. Have students add information to their mind maps as new ideas surface.

Ask students 'have you seen cyberbullying happen?' and ask them to share their stories without naming names. Ask students how they handled the situation and if they could have handled it better. How might they handle it now?

The videos provide some ideas of strategies to deal with cyberbullying: don't respond, block the bully, ignore them or save the evidence and get help. Other suggestions include always being respectful in your online communications, treating others how you would like to be treated, thinking about everything you post from many perspectives to ensure it's not hurtful towards others, and changing your passwords often in order to protect your own profiles from being hacked or used to bully others.

Adaptations

Younger students need to be aware that people can be mean or hurtful online, and when that happens they should ignore it and tell a trusted adult.

Older students will have much more experience with cyberbullying in the form of hurtful comments and negative posts. Some might have some very personal stories of what has happened to them. The development of a plan of action for when they see cyberbullying happening and awareness campaigns like the video from the students at Joyanne Miller School could be relevant and meaningful extensions of this lesson.

Have students brainstorm effective rules to follow when communicating online and work together as a class to develop an 'online code of conduct' that class members feel they can follow when posting to social media or commenting on other people's profiles. They can use their mind maps and t-charts as a guide for ideas and explore other websites (listed below) that provide ideas and resources about cyberbullying.

Additional Resources
There is a huge collection of anti-cyberbullying resources available. Here are just a few links to check out:
http://www.nsteens.org/videos/cyberbullying
http://old.digizen.org/cyberbullying/fullFilm.aspx
http://mediasmarts.ca/cyberbullying
https://www.commonsensemedia.org/videos/cyberbullying-prevention-tips-for-kids
http://mediasmarts.ca/cyberbullying/resources-teachers
http://www.cyberbullying.info/resources/resources.php
A simple web search on 'cyberbullying resources' pulls up lots of useful resources and activities.

Cross-curricular Outcomes Also Addressed
Health and Career Prep – stereotyping, bullying awareness, self-image, peer pressure
Language Arts – students could write the script for their own video on cyberbullying

~developed by Kristin Sward, 2014